

Suggested Practices to Improve Habitat Characteristics

Edge configuration and border extent

1. Establish a field border strip of herbaceous or woody vegetation around all or a portion of a field. Mow or disc grass strips at 3 to 5 year intervals to control woody vegetation and encourage annual weeds.
2. Preserve existing woody draws or plant such areas to shrubs, trees or conifers to provide winter cover.
3. Allow shallow draws to revegetate naturally or plant to warm season grasses or a grass-legume mixture. Delay mowing until after July 15 to avoid nesting losses.
4. Establish a field border, windbreak, or hedgerow planting according to SCS technical guide specifications.
5. Leave an unmowed strip around all or a portion of hayfields to provide nesting cover.
6. Establish a cut back border along a woodland edge according to technical guide specifications.
7. Whenever possible, plan for involuted, rather than straight borders to increase edge.

Concealment cover

1. Practices 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 above will add field concealment cover.
2. Establish brushpiles near other existing cover, such as in corners, brushy draws, woodlands, etc. Construct according to MDC instructions or SCS Biology Job Sheet No. 11.
3. Protect woodlands from grazing.
4. Fence farm ponds to exclude livestock. If possible, plant trees and/or shrubs to enhance cover.
5. Establish grass filter strips according to SCS technical guide around cropfield ponds to reduce sedimentation and add cover.
6. Plant field corners to evergreen species to provide winter cover. A $\frac{1}{4}$ acre planting measures 150 feet along each fence (or axis) from the corner post.

Vegetative cover

1. Develop a rotational grazing system for pastures.
2. Exclude livestock from woodlands.
3. Graze and mow according to the Pasture and Hayland Management standard in the SCS technical guide.
4. Selected plantings or cutting can be established to meet ideal percentages listed in the guide sheet.

Woodland size class and canopy coverage

1. Timber Stand Improvement according to MDC recommendations.

Dominant tree species

1. Timber Stand Improvement according to MDC recommendations.

Forest openings

1. Maintain or create the optimum percent of clearings as shown in the guide sheet.
2. Clearings may be utilized for food plots or green browse to enhance their food value. Utilize SCS soil maps to select clearing sites suitable for cultivation.

Field size

1. Establish wooded field border or hedgerow planting according to SCS technical guide.
2. Encourage woody vegetation in natural drainage ways and exclude livestock where feasible.
3. Plant small, block conifer plantings for both winter and escape cover. Plan for one acre in size and 200 feet deep from north to south for wind protection.

Woodland size

1. Use any of the practices described above to add cropland, grassland or old field habitat types. Food plots can be substituted for the cropland habitat.

Important food plants

1. Various management techniques will encourage a diversity of important plants. Selective cutting or thinning in woodland; or mowing, disking, chemicals, burning, livestock exclusion and even grazing in pastures and haylands can result in more food plants. Selective planting and seeding can also add food plants.

Grazing or haying pressure

1. Practices 1, 2, and 3 under Vegetative Cover will improve existing habitat.

Legume canopy coverage

1. Establish legumes in pastures and haylands.
2. Seed old fields with Korean lespedeza or other legumes.

Grassland composition

1. Establish cool season and warm season grass forage systems.
2. Establish legumes in grass forage systems.
3. Avoid single species grass monotypes.
4. Manage pastures according to SCS technical guides.

Cropping practices and rotations

1. Crop field every other year with idle years producing annual weed crops.
2. Leave a minimum of $\frac{1}{4}$ acre of grain crops unharvested for each 40 acres of cropfield. Leave crops in patches or strips near available cover.
3. Encourage crop rotation systems which utilize forage and small grain crops.
4. Minimize herbicide applications.

Cropfield management

1. Establish conservation tillage systems.
2. Encourage crop rotation systems which utilize forage and small grain crops.

3. Encourage spring tillage.

4. Fall plow only a portion of the field, leaving unplowed borders or strips for spring tillage.

5. Encourage the use of winter cover crops.

Distance characteristics

1. Suggest land use changes where appropriate, to provide needed habitat types within the optimum ranges listed for the species. Selected practices such as field borders, hedgerow plantings, revegetation of watercourses, grassy fence rows, food plots and green browse plots can all be used to add needed diversity, interspersation and edge.



Missouri Department of Conservation

U.S.D.A.
Soil Conservation Service, Columbia

